

# Foreign Language Committee

Thursday, April 11, 2013

**Meeting Called to Order:** 5:00 P.M.

**Members/Introductions:** Terry Heck (CH), Tylene Hicks (CH), Suzie Marin (CP), Teresa Elliott, Jennifer Mahoney, Erica Edmonston, Daniel Saksa, DiAnn Albert (PRIDE), Lynne McCarthy, Milka Pejovic, Dustin Burns (Board), Dianne El Hajj (Board), Cathy Pierce (Superintendent), Barbara Ryan (Board)

## **Norms/Ground Rules:**

- Start and end on time.
- Divide research tasks/workload.
- Allow members time to speak and get their point across.
- Be culturally aware (we all come from differing backgrounds).
- Stay on task/topic (No bunny trails/bird walks).
- Everyone's opinions have value.
- Silence cell phones.
- Keep moving/focus for progress.
- Allow for majority vote to rule when progress/decisions have to be made.

**Purpose:** *Explore and recommend the best foreign language instruction options to best meet the needs of Santee children.*

## **Meeting Minutes:**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Reviewed spreadsheet presenting proposals for enrichment and immersion programs.
- Erica pointed out that Riverview offers her daughter a 100% immersion until 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- Question posed – If we have this program in affect, what happens when our students enter into high school and college...can their instruction continue in dual language?
- Dustin mentioned that he had a conversation with the Principal at Lakeside Middle School about their possible want to start a charter high school on their campus to continue their immersion program into High School.
- Some parents have voiced concerns that once their children progress into higher grades, they feel they cannot communicate or help with their children's homework due to their own level of understanding of the second language.
- Possible need for parent support meetings for curriculum and language/program understanding.
- Enrichment programs at the High School – Will the variety of language courses be eliminated with the focus on immersion programs in Spanish and Mandarin?

- Enrichment programs on Saturdays or before school, to offer fairly to all students, it should be offered at all schools, not just one that all students travel to. Additionally, a variety of languages/electives should be offered.
- Concern that the program must offer rigorous instruction, no watered down curriculum.
- Possibility of extending the school day? The amount of vocabulary will be doubled, high level vocabulary in both languages.
- It was mentioned that Santee might want to offer some kind of enrichment/immersion program to older siblings of younger students who are entering into the immersion program (a 2-for-1 deal)? Maybe some kind of after school enrichment program to offer languages (for older siblings)? Can we add this type of enrichment/sibling program to the board for consideration?
- Dustin mentioned that Santee should learn from other districts and their growing pains, use their data to make informed decisions. Erica mentioned that as an educator, having a plan (mapped for multiple years) as to what the plan for immersion would be, would make her feel more comfortable about the future.
- Can we propose that as one school's immersion class(es) become full, instead of displacing the English only classes, start a new class of immersion at another school in Santee...providing more and more opportunities to multiple communities in Alpine.
- Dianne mentioned that Poway's Immersion School does a great job of incorporating community and combining the two schools to still create a cohesive school feel. Can't forget the social component of education.
- Longfellow shared that students are already bilingual in two languages and are beginning to learn a third. Once two are known, the mind can more easily bridge to another language.
- Maybe we should outline what we want a bilingual teacher to look like? We need native speakers, not just BCLAD teachers who know the language.
- Survey Monkey – Suzie created an enrichment survey for the Santee Community to find out what languages do other employees speak? Who do we have access to that can offer language resources for enrichment opportunities? As a group, we modified/added to the survey. Suzie will fine-tune the survey and re-present it at the next meeting.
- Dianne mentioned the possibility of starting enrichment in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and then adding 7<sup>th</sup>, and then 6<sup>th</sup>...and so on.
- Terry mentioned using Dianne's enrichment idea simultaneously with the immersion program in Kinder. Essentially as both programs grew, the two programs would meet in the middle and all students would benefit more quickly.

**What information are we still missing/lacking for ENRICHMENT:**

1. Data collection about surrounding districts about what worked, what didn't, what grade level did they start at? Can we send people to interview administrators at surrounding schools/districts for this information. If anyone has sample survey questions, please send ideas to Terry by email.
2. What would it take for 1 teacher to roam to all 8<sup>th</sup> grade schools in the district to offer language enrichment? What would 2 or 4 teachers' schedules look like? How many hours of instruction would be possible?

**What information are we still missing/lacking for IMMERSION:**

1. Have we taken into consideration for new adoptions of curricular materials each time the adoption comes up? Do we have a system in place for replacement materials, such as through the District Office or from school to school?
2. Of our currently adopted curriculum, is there a comparable option for Spanish?
3. Possibly an additional interview/survey of immersion schools for like information?

**Next scheduled meetings:**

- May 9, 2013 – 6:00 – 8:00 P.M. (Rio Seco School)

**Meeting Concluded:** 8:07 P.M.